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by

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It Happened in Rome

BY ELMER DAVIS

TO cover in fiction the last forty years of the Roman Republic, with all the principal political figures of the time as characters, would seem to require a novel as long as "Anthony Adverse" or "Of Time and the River." Phyllis Bentley, however, is modest and unselfish enough to compress the gaseous flow of the divine afflatus into manageable volume, and in somewhat less than five hundred pages* covers the ground about as well as anybody could. With a technique rather like that of the movies, flashes of fiction are interspersed with summaries of the intervening history; the admirable opening chapter, with the young Caesar in flight from Sulla's soldiers, may lead you to expect a more conventional novel than you get, but it would have been impossible to write the whole book on that scale. There is no hero, in the technical sense—but then there was none; Caesar, naturally, is the principal character, and it is possible that in treating him genetically Miss Bentley sentimentalizes him. But he is not after all much more prominent than Pompey and Cicero and Cato, and other men whose interaction brought about the transition from oligarchy under the form of democracy to monarchy under the form of diarchy. The net product is a smooth and lucid narrative, an easily swallowed capsule from which any reader may learn with a minimum of effort what happened to the Roman Republic.

Why worry about the Roman Republic? Well, something—nobody knows just what—is happening to our republic, and the study of an earlier instance might be profitable.

> The history of past centuries ought to be the instructress of the present, though not in the vulgar sense, as if one could simply by turning the leaves discover the conjunctures of the present in the records of the past; it is instructive because the observation of the earlier forms of culture reveals the organic conditions of civilization generally—the fundamental forces everywhere alike, and the manner of their combination different.

Thus Mommsen, cited by Miss Bentley in a prefatory note. With the proper reservations, then, one may note a few of the resemblances suggested by her story. It is of course her story, her personal interpretation of the record, from a standpoint indicated by her title. She dislikes dictatorships, and treats Cato and particularly Brutus with a respect permissible to the novelist, which as historical figures they hardly deserve. Moreover, she suggests improbable compunctions in Caesar. "One works in the conditions life offers, one can do no other," he tells Brutus after his victory in the Civil War, and then wishes that he were once more the young idealist who scorned practical compromises. But certainly one can do no other if one wants to work at all, and Caesar after Pharsalia must have known it. Nevertheless Miss Bentley is a good enough novelist to make her people plausible, and a sufficiently conscientious historian to see that the loss of Roman freedom was not merely the result of one man's ambition.

Dorothea Lange

"The most durable of the reforms of the Gracchi . . . was the distribution of food to the city poor." Photograph reproduced from "U. S. Camera, 1935" (Morrow).

That this loss of freedom was in itself a bad thing is undeniable; one need only note the servility of most senators so early as the time of Tiberius, and a change whose disadvantages were largely theoretical under a good Emperor became catastrophic under a Caligula or a Nero. But who lost what freedom? Such blue-bloods as a Calpurnius Piso, a Caecilius Metellus, a Junius Silanus, might well feel that the Empire had deprived them of the best things of life. They could still become consuls, but only by the favor of a Caesar Octavianus or a Claudius Nero who stood above them; they could still govern provinces, but now they had to govern them with an efficiency and honesty almost unknown in republican times. But what did lesser men lose? The immense benefits conferred on the provincials by the Empire are well known. As for Roman citizens, those who lived in the city did indeed lose the right to vote for public officials and for laws; but in practice that meant chiefly that they lost their income from election-day bribes. The popular power counted for more in legislation than in election, but even then a law was apt to be nullified by constitutional technicalities, or unconstitutional violence, invoked by the nobility. And to the Roman citizens living too far away to attend the assemblies the Empire meant nothing but peace and order, a chance to do business without being robbed of the fruits of his life work, a feeling that there was a man on the Palatine whose own interest required him, if he knew his job, to look out for the interest of every class in the state.

The loss of freedom had disastrous con-

Next Week

SOVIET COMMUNISM
By SIDNEY and BEATRICE WEBB
Reviewed by Harold J. Laski

THE AMERICAN ARMY IN FRANCE
By GENERAL JAMES G. HARBORD
Reviewed by John T. Winterich

* *FREEDOM, FAREWELL! By Phyllis Bentley. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1936. $2.50.*

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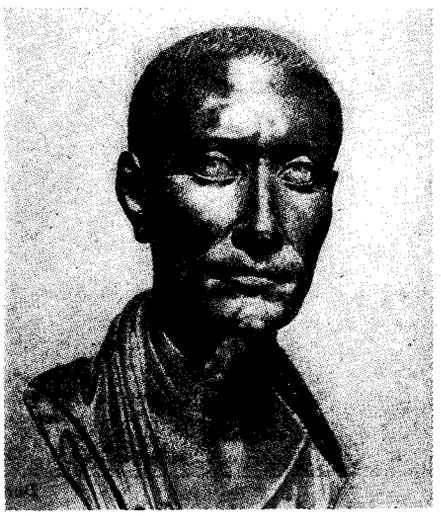
sequences in the end, but the average man had lost his freedom a century before the Empire, when the constitution was saved by force from the amendments to make it fit changed conditions proposed by the Gracchi. They would have extended the franchise to correspond with the realities, and above all would have taken out some of the constitutional checks and balances, in order to get things done. But after that constitutional amendment became impossible except by the army of a Marius, a Sulla, a Caesar, and freedom was a privilege reserved to the rich and powerful. Nero, who virtually extirpated this privileged class, was one of the most popular of the Emperors; the average man could not feel that what happened to a Calpurnius Piso or a Junius Silanus meant much to him, because for two centuries past what happened to him had not often meant much to a Calpurnius Piso or a Junius Silanus.

All this is a familiar story, but worth remembering when Mr. John W. Davis laments the prospective extinction of our liberties by the Caesar (or would he say the Nero?) now occupying the White House. Mr. Davis, when he refuses to believe that the American people can be "bribed or frightened or wheedled into giving over their individual lives into the care and keeping of other men," seems to agree with the Marxians that economics is everything, that restrictions on hours and wages mean restrictions on behavior and conscience too. Some of us doubt that; but accept his premise for the moment. Tell the small investor who lost his life savings in 1929, the factory hand who lost his job in 1930, the farmer who has worked hard all his life with no result but to get deeper into debt, that his individual economic life was not in the keeping of other men in the Golden Age of Coolidge; or will not be at the mercy of other men again, if the American Liberty League succeeds in saving the liberty of its members. The individual life of Mr. John W. Davis is under no such restraint; so long as there is any law business at all, such talent as his will get the pick of it. He is about as competent a spokesman for the average American as a Piso or a Metellus for the average Roman.

"The idea," he says, "that men will tamely submit their economic welfare and their individual hopes and ambitions to the control of other men without struggling to capture the seats of decision for themselves is a lotus eater's dream." Exactly; hence all the agitations that now worry Mr. John W. Davis. Millions who discovered in 1929 that their economic welfare, their hopes and ambitions, were dependent on Mitchells and Wiggins, on Insulls and Kreugers, are trying to capture the seats of decision for themselves; but that does not necessarily imply the class war of which Mr. Davis and Al Smith are afraid. The Caesarian revolution that ended the Roman republic was a popular movement, but not a class war in the strict sense such as had threatened under Catiline; it was, in Clausewitz's phrase, the prosecution of a political end by other means, the only means that the oligarchy had left to the democrats; and its two leaders who successively attained to supreme power were men not only of immense intelligence but, in their varying ways, of high patriotism. Rome got off better than it had any right to expect. Nevertheless the war that raged intermittently from the Rubicon to Actium was in itself a great disaster, almost fatal to civilization. Let us see why it was not averted.

In the first place, the Roman constitution (unwritten, of course, but old and respected) outdid even our own in checks



JULIUS CAESAR
From a bronze bust in the Berlin Museum.

and balances. It was unconstitutional to transact public business without the proper religious formalities, and when a measure to restrict the power of the rich was proposed, somebody usually managed to stop it on a technicality. Words and formulas were regarded not only as more sacred than the needs of society, but as powerful enough to impose an impenetrable barrier to changes the people wanted. Whatever the philosophy and ethics of a restrictive constitution, the question how long a dam of paper can hold back a flood is a matter of scientific and dispassionate calculation of pressures and tensile strength; in Rome, eventually, the dam broke. But just possibly it might have held, if the privileged classes had not fatally undermined their own moral standing.

They did that in the first place by flagrant misgovernment, by incompetence and corruption that make the worst days of Harding look like an example of civic virtue; the Roman governing class was overthrown because it was patently no longer adequate to its traditional job. Nowadays one hears eminent gentlemen talking about the blessings of the system that flourished under Coolidge, as if they were unaware of what happened in 1929 and later; but the country at large remembers what that system came to, even if its principal beneficiaries do not. A ruling class which could let slip the dominant international position we held after the war, and at the same time drive us straight toward domestic catastrophe, can hardly claim to have earned the right to govern any longer.

The Roman constitution, like our own, was supposed to protect the liberties of all citizens. Unfortunately, as interpreted by the conservatives in the last century of the republic, it functioned chiefly as a protector of wealth; but the very gentlemen who were zealous for observance of the last punctilious (and nullifying) religious rites demanded by the constitution when it was a question of protecting their own interests, were willing to ignore the constitution when it favored the other side. The martial-law decree that ended Gaius Gracchus was of very dubious legality, and the riot of which his brother Tiberius was a victim was pure Fascist counter-revolution. A constitution which works for one side only, and that for a party which is incapable of governing—the only answer to that, eventually, was the crossing of the Rubicon.

The Caesarian revolution might have been averted, then, by common honesty and common sense among the senators and their adherents such as the conservatives had shown (if we may trust the historians) in earlier periods of the republic; and thus the men of good will in all classes might have been brought together to meet the needs of the time without the sacrifice of freedom. This is obviously what the grammarians call a past supposition contrary to fact; but it did not seem utterly impossible in the years just before Pharsalia. At least it did not seem impossible to Cicero, who was always hoping for a "concordia ordinum," that is, a harmony of the classes, a union of all men of good will to work for the welfare of the state. It must be observed that what Cicero was chiefly concerned with in practice was the concord of the higher orders, the Senate and the equites ("most of whom," as T. W. Allen used to remind his students, "had never seen an equus"); the function of the plebs, apparently, was harmoniously to recognize its place. But even Cicero, when he sat down to write about it ten years after he had rallied against Catiline everybody who had anything to lose, perceived that this aspiration hardly conformed to the realities. "Moribus antiquis res stat Romana virisque," Ennius had written; but in Ci-

(*Continued on page* 14)

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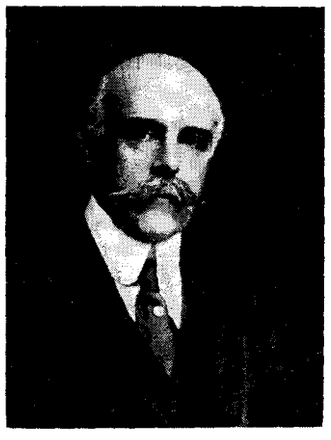
Exploding the Idea of Race

WE EUROPEANS: A Survey of "Racial Problems." By Julian S. Huxley and A. C. Haddon. With a Contribution by A. M. Carr-Saunders. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by ELLSWORTH HUNTINGTON

IN the good old days of Roosevelt the First the air was filled with cries of race suicide. The sturdy, intelligent Nordics were dying out; something must be done about it. Madison Grant, with his book on "The Passing of the Great Race," became cheer leader of the Nordics in America, just as Houston Chamberlain, with his "Foundations of Civilization," had done in Europe. Since that time the Nordic tendency has culminated in Hitler's "pro-Aryan" and "anti-Semitic" campaign. The opposite tendency has culminated in a widespread agreement among non-German ethnologists that Nordic superiority is a racial myth. In an interesting little book called "We Europeans" three of the foremost British authorities, Messrs. Huxley, Haddon, and Carr-Saunders attempt to place this myth in its grave. They have done their work well and seem to prove their main point. Nevertheless, an emotional bias against the Hitler regime and the Nordic Myth is evident. Listen to this: "When we read in Madison Grant's 'The Passing of the Great Race' that the greatest and most masterful personalities have had blond hair and blue eyes we can make a shrewd guess at its author's complexion." But Mr. Grant, though Nordic in stature and features, had black hair until it turned white.



MADISON GRANT
"Cheer Leader of the Nordics"

The main thesis of "We Europeans" is that race, in the sense of a body of people claiming a common descent and common biological characteristics, is a purely imaginary concept. Pure races may have existed long ago when mankind first broke up into diverse geographical groups. They may exist in some far future, if a selective process ultimately isolates certain types in certain geographical areas. No such thing as a pure race exists today.

One proof of this is seen on maps showing qualities such as stature, shape of the head, color and texture of the hair, and the form of the nose. Each quality is distributed over the world with varying intensity, but the mountain peaks of one quality show comparatively little relation to those of another. The most fair-skinned people, for example, may have straight hair, short stature, brown eyes, and other non-Nordic traits. Language, too, as has often been pointed out, shows little or no relation to man's physical characteristics. So-called races such as the Jews, are extremely complex in both complexion and physique. Therefore the idea of race should be dropped from the science of ethnology. In its place let us study ethnic groups or nations. Thus ethnology, if it means merely the science of race, will die painlessly. Anthropology will still remain. Our authors use the two terms interchangeably.

JULIAN HUXLEY

A most interesting part of "We Europeans" shows how immature the science of anthropology still is and how great are its possibilities. Hitherto, aside from exploding the idea of race in its extreme form, the science has mainly concerned itself with man's outer proportions—head form, nasal index, etc.—and with the culture of people who are still primitive. Moreover, even the outer proportions have generally been expressed as averages; but averages are of little value because every ethnic group is a mixture of many diverse types. So the first step is to see what percentage of longheads, shortheads, and so on are contained in each group. A good beginning along this line was made some years ago by the late Roland B. Dixon, but his reward was severe criticism from his fellow anthropologists. Nevertheless, it is certain that the anthropologists are coming to this conviction. But think how unimportant a person's hair, stature, or complexion is compared with his heart, lungs, stomach, and glands. Of what importance is the shape of a man's skull compared with the character of the brain which it protects? And what do we know as to the differences between the pituitary gland or cerebellum of a Negro, a Chinese, or a Swede? Yet these are the things that really count in determining the differences between one ethnic group and another. Mr. Huxley and Professor Haddon hammer home the need of this kind of study if anthropology is really to do the work of an adult science.

Not only do new fields of study remain wholly unexplored, but genetics now supplies wholly new methods of studying physical anthropology. Thanks to Mendel and his followers we now know that when races mix they do not truly blend. The genes, or carriers of inheritance, derived from one race or another, remain distinct. The qualities of either race—we cannot easily get away from the word—may reappear at any time unless they are removed by selection. Anthropologists must join hands with biologists. The possibilities when this is done are truly thrilling. "We Europeans" ought to inspire hundreds of young scientists to take up the challenge which it throws down so clearly. Do innate mental traits differ from one ethnic group to another, and what is their relation to bodily traits and culture?

In this connection one notes a significant gap in the reasoning of "We Europeans." The authors do not recognize that the extreme importance of mental traits causes them to be the ones upon which the process of natural or social selection is mainly exercised. The Jews, for instance, are markedly diverse in physical type, but mentally they may be much more homogeneous. Nor do the authors recognize the fact that migration is a selective process. The selection may be favorable or unfavorable; it may be physical in part, but it is also mental. This brings up the problem of the superiority of mixed ethnic groups. The mixture of races, as the authors say, is dangerous not so much because of biological differences as because social differences make it difficult for people of diverse cultures to live together harmoniously. But racial mixture tends to create an almost unlimited variety of types, since the genes of each ethnic group remain distinct. This, the authors say, causes mixed ethnic groups like the English, French, and Germans, to be superior. But is it not equally true that the mixed groups are the result of many migrations? The people who survive difficult migrations tend to be those who are innately adaptable, courageous, and persevering. Such people appear likely to pass on their traits to their children, but the anthropologists have not yet investigated the relation of race to race in this respect. The reader lays down "We Europeans" with the feeling that anthropology may offer an even more fascinating field than physics and chemistry. Few sciences are still so near to infancy, and hence so fascinating.

Ellsworth Huntington is research associate in geography at Yale.

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One Emergency after Another

A HISTORY OF EUROPE. Vol. I. Ancient and Mediæval. Vol. II. Renaissance, Reformation, Reason. Vol. III. The Liberal Experiment. By H. A. L. Fisher. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1935-6. $12.

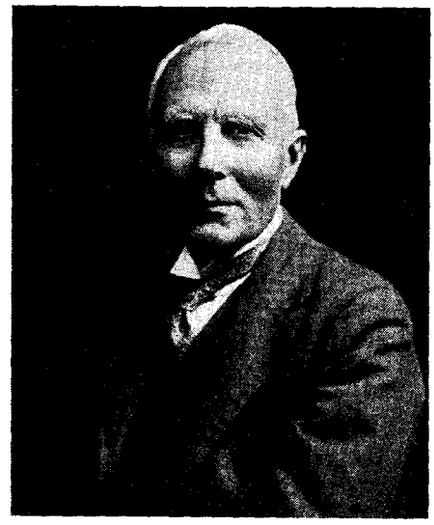
Reviewed by WILBUR CORTEZ ABBOTT

"IT is my conviction," wrote Dionysius of Halicarnassus some eighteen hundred years ago, "that any one who proposes to bequeath to after generations some memorial that is destined to survive his own bodily existence, and especially a writer of historical works (the sanctuaries, we believe, of that first principle of all wisdom and understanding, the Truth), is under an obligation in the first place to choose a good subject of a lofty character which will be truly profitable to the reader, and in the second place to devote the utmost care and industry to the task of providing himself with proper sources for his own composition. There are, of course, historical writers who have been led astray by the thirst for notoriety, no matter of what kind, or for opportunities to display their literary ability in a *tour de force*. . . . Such writers are neither admired by after generations for their learning nor celebrated for their abilities, but have simply contrived to implant in every mind . . . the impression that their personal aims in life are reflected in their publications."

That passage echoing across the centuries might well be the text for a discussion not only of these volumes of Mr. Fisher's but for the phenomenon which they represent. Whether "general" or "universal" history is endemic or merely epidemic in human affairs, it is apparent that the last few years have seen an extraordinary outburst of this ancient and honorable phase of historical writing. It is scarcely worth while to enumerate the various expressions of this phenomenon, for if the reader's mind does not recall the titles the publishers' lists will gladly supply the omission. And though these volumes of Mr. Fisher's do not, like some others, come under the head of "universal" history they at least may be classified as "general" history of Europe and in some degree of Europeans. What, then, of its character and its scope?

"I begin this book," says Mr. Fisher in his preface, "with neolithic man and conclude with Stalin and Mustapha Kemal, Mussolini and Hitler. Between these rough and rugged frontiers there are to be found some prospects flattering to human pride," and others, he courteously refrains from adding, not so flattering. "Men wiser and more learned than I have discerned in history a plot, a rhythm, a predetermined pattern. . . . I can see only one emergency following upon another. . . . This is not a doctrine of cynicism and despair. The fact of progress is written plain and large on the page of history, but progress is not a law of nature. The ground gained by one generation may be lost by the next." With such words and in such a spirit he begins his long and brilliant survey of the journey of Europe from cave-man to, shall we say, as he seems almost to imply, cave-man?

The development which he describes is that of the children of Hellas, and while he pays his respects to geography and climate, to neolithic man, to the men of the bronze age and the Aryans, he begins his narrative, in effect, with the Ægean culture, and actually with Herodotus. His next chapter might be entitled Thucydides, though the historian of the Peloponnesian War finds no mention in the sources of Mr. Fisher's narrative. Thence he proceeds with varying detail in the different periods, to the fall of Napoleon, with which this portion of his narrative concludes, leaving the nineteenth century to a third part which, after our pleasant modern fashion, is reckoned worth five times the space of the whole history of Hellas, even by this devoted Hellene.



THE RIGHT HON. H. A. L. FISHER

It is, then, unlike some of its contemporary rivals, not his purpose, to survey mankind with extensive view from China to Peru, but to trace, as fully and as clearly as may be, that part of human development which has made Europeans what they are, to describe, so to speak, the process by which he made his way from a neolithic cave to the study of an Oxford don. And for that task who could be better fitted than this Oxford don, able, accomplished, highly trained in the school of the Academy and no less in that of Modern History, experienced in human nature as in books, both by theory and practice, and drawing from the depths of that experience the story of a civilization of which he is such an admirable representative? This is neither flattery nor fantasy. No one can read these pages without some sense that Mr. Fisher is telling more than the facts of history; he is describing, as it were, his —and our—own family history. On that note he begins: "We Europeans are the children of Hellas." On that note he ends: "The war has left us an evil legacy. . . . May future generations close the rents, heal the wounds, and replace our squandered treasure of humanity, toleration, and good sense."

Between those two sentences lie twelve hundred and fifty pages of explanation of how things were and how they came to be as they are now, pages which reflect in nearly every line that "humanity, toleration, and good sense" which he describes, as well as wide knowledge and great understanding. It has been welcomed almost effusively by his colleagues and countrymen as a brilliant narrative, "intensive," "memorable," "nimble and subtle," the work of a scholar and a humanist, who bears his knowledge lightly through this long journey. It is, in fact, an important and interesting contribution to the synthesis of our knowledge of ourselves, and, apart from its bulk, not to be lightly taken up or lightly laid aside. It meets the tests laid down by Dionysius—it has a great subject, it reveals care and industry, and it seeks the Truth. And if its conclusion that Europe faces "two alternative and sharply contrasted destinies," that "With science we may lay civilization in ruins or enter into a period of plenty and well-being the like of which has never been experienced by mankind," if it seems to conclude that what we may call morals and intelligent politics have not kept pace with scientific achievement, that is a conclusion with which none of us can find much fault. Only—and with this Mr. Fisher would no doubt agree—"material power," "the developing miracle of science," even "plenty and well-being" have not much to do with either what has been called "happiness" or even with what has been known as "greatness" in past civilizations, for those were not matters of externality.

As to the book itself, the praises of the reviewers have scarcely been too great. It is an admirable piece of work. It echoes years of reading and study, of reflection and discussion, and if one occasionally dissents from the *obiter dicta* which sprinkle its pages, that in itself is a measure of the value of the book. If one has certain doubts that Bede believed the end of the world was at hand and that Gildas would have been a better name to quote in that connection; if

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one has certain doubts about the evaluation of Cromwell as by nature a "constitutional ruler"; if one is prepared to challenge what seems to him the far too concise and favorable estimate of Charles James Fox; if one might venture a haunting doubt that Metternich somehow deserves more favorable judgment from this generation than he received from nineteenth century Liberals; these are but trifles, not to be weighed against the general approbation of the spirit and the judgment here exhibited.

It is always easy to make such suggestions. There is doubtless not a reader of these volumes who would not make some according to his general conceptions and his specific knowledge of individuals or of episodes, just as every one sees something different in the face of one whom he has known which the portrait painter did not catch to his satisfaction. Yet viewing these volumes as a whole, it seems to one reader that it would be difficult to find a clearer, saner, better balanced series of judgments on an almost infinite number of people and events than he finds here, or judgments with which, on the whole, he would find himself more in sympathy. He might wonder, indeed, at the omission of some more recent books—and some not so recent—in the list of works "which may be consulted," at the ends of the chapters. He might, conceivably, wonder that there is a good deal on India and something on the British Empire while South America and the French Empire all but lack any reference. He might well question whether Europeans beyond the seas have not, after all, had more influence on Europeans at home than they receive credit for in these pages. But when all is said and done, this is a great achievement, and as "text-book," "outside reading," or as "non-fiction" for the "general reader," there are few if any books of our generation to be compared with it for scope, interest, and knowledge.

Wilbur Cortez Abbott is professor of history at Harvard. His latest book is "Conflicts with Oblivion."

Equipped for Life?

A TREE GROWN STRAIGHT. By Percy Marks. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

THE problem of treating not exactly an average man or a normal man, but a man who had established equilibrium in life and was equipped to live it fully—such a problem had beset the imaginary novelist, Perry Lane. But he could not write his novel, until at last he *found* his novel in the life of Andy Ross, who sat up all one night telling him (by request) his life history. Such is the scheme of Mr. Marks's Prelude, Interludes, and Postludes to this, his latest work of fiction. Andy's story, the main body of the work, is given us as straight narrative in the third person.

Mr. Marks's strongest suit is his description of adolescence. It is not for nothing that his former "The Plastic Age" attracted attention. This author knows what impressionable youth is up against and also how it might be handled ideally by clever and thoughtful parents. The parents of Andy Ross are almost ideal, and they keep the young sapling growing straight. The hero does not develop unscathed by priggishness—few boys with sensitive and watchful parents do—but his father certainly has more horse-sense than most fathers we have seen portrayed in recent fiction. Another thing gives the book originality—strange that it should—young Andy is not "done in" by heredity and environment (save that he is naturally a conformist). His childhood and youth are happy, despite the loss of a loved little sister. The tough babies won't like that—maybe they won't admit it. Yet we have known of instances!

The novel chiefly concerns the sex education of Andy—all plausible, and a good handbook for parents. The young

PERCY MARKS
Drawing by Deane Keller

man does grow straight, under unusually enlightened adult advice. So far so good. But what this reviewer missed in the book was any development of Andy's mind in regard to a rapidly changing social and economic world. Andy is little touched by world events, or the ideas of his time, save in regard to the late Great War, from which the return of his boyhood hero, Doug Heath, furnishes a finely bitter episode. He learns racial tolerance through a Japanese school and college mate; he learns of the spark of good in precocious evil through one vividly presented character, young Bobby Leroy; and at the end of the novel, to be sure, he is only just beginning to live. The variety of girls and women in his life, also, is clearly differentiated. They are well described. Yet it seems as though his mind must have questioned beyond the facts, merely, that money isn't everything, that wealth has its responsibilities, and that big business men may also be human beings. Yet again, of course, the emphasis is always upon his averageness. Which, perhaps, is the author's own comment on modern education as dispensed in our large universities. For Andy certainly possessed enough gray matter to learn more than he did.

This criticism may range beyond the intention of the book and therefore be unfair. But something appears to be lacking to complete the picture. Adolescence is also the time of lengthy discourse concerning the structure of society and so on, right down to settling the problems of the universe; and that aspect of it seems scamped. This is, therefore, not nearly the most significant novel of youth that could be written. Far from it. But it does demonstrate what fine material there is in youth for the yeast of enlightenment—if the enlightenment of parents and educators were only sufficient!

Sonnet to Grace

By WILLIAM ELLERY LEONARD

WE swam from pier to pier across the storm . . .
Then on the sands we watched the golden glow
On cloud and lake, when over us stood a form,
Sudden and lithe and bronze, and said, "Hello."
I matched his shining limbs with yours so white,
His young blue eyes, so buoyant, with your blue,
His dripping hair, all amber in the light,
With yours, belovèd, and you never knew.
O some such life, draining the fresh green earth,
Such strong free arms, in gorgeous interplay,
Should follow yours in one triumphant mirth,
And dance your beauty down a long, long way . . .
And yet for you and me the sun was warm,
And yet we swam together in the storm.

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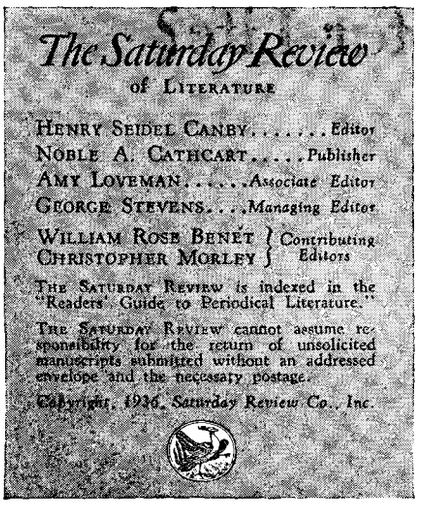
The Saturday Review
of Literature

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Word-Minded Dictators

THE old-fashioned conception of literature as belles lettres written for the delectation of connoisseurs is rapidly disappearing. New histories of literature, like Parrington's studies of the intellectual life of America, or Mr. Van Wyck Brooks's description of the esthetic flowering of New England, depart widely from the rutted track of fiction, poetry, and essay. As one finds philosophy exhibited in a foreign policy as clearly as in an academic system, so literature can be found in oratory or a state document as often as in the sweet airs that give delight and hurt not of poetry or the drama.

Once the queston, What were the best books of an age? is changed to a very different query, Where did the literary impulse attain to its greatest influence?, the nature of literary history sensibly alters. With the second question, we are trying to discover a force rather than a merit, and that force will often prove to have been most vigorous in unexpected directions, often outside of the province of the orthodox literary historian.

What, for example, were the outstanding writings of the period 1914-1917? Unquestionably, as one looks back, the notes and messages of Woodrow Wilson. They had the intensity and cogency of phrasing which is a sign of high literary potential. They put expressions into the language which firmly rooted there and will probably continue to be familiar: "too proud to fight," "make the world safe for democracy." We are not discussing here the wisdom, the validity, or ultimate usefulness of these messages. It is indeed too early to tell. But the word charged with emotion (which is a good definition of literature) reached its highest effective voltage in those days in the writings of Wilson.

The parallel with today is interesting. If one asks what have been the most effective discharges of emotionalized words in recent years, the answer is obvious. They have been in the speeches of Hitler and Mussolini, our two word-minded dictators.

Some may question the use of "literary" for Hitler. It cannot be used except by stretching the term to cover rhetoric, as rhetoric was understood in the days of oratory. "Mein Kampf" is very villainous literature, but regarded as rhetoric it has its persuasive excellences. As for Hitler's speeches, those who have experienced many say that he makes but one. Every speech ranges through a group of selected appeals to the emotions—and these appeals are extraordinarily effective even in the ears of his enemies, who scoff at his ideas as set down in cold print but are moved by his oratory. It would seem probable that we have had no more outstanding example of rhetoric pure and simple since the days of the Romans.

But with Mussolini we pass into a murky realm that has always been claimed by literature. Whatever he may be in practice, in his speeches he is a great romantic in the tradition of Byron. Like that great ego who liked to think of himself as a persecuted archangel, and who spoke for the imperial romanticism of Napoleon so much better than Napoleon himself, Mussolini deals entirely in terms of magnitude. His Italians are encouraged to think of themselves as of greatness suppressed. Glory, courage, disdain for petty welfare, but most of all glory, are fed to them in words which must recall to every literary student a romantic age which we thought was safely dead. As with Byron (before he got there) the Greek revolution was exalted into a battle for the age of Pericles, so with Mussolini the Abyssinian adventure is a first stroke for the revival of the wide swung Roman empire whose vastness is necessary in order to match the greatness of the Italian soul.

Mussolini is a Childe Harold, who if he can impress Europe with his own and his people's greatness is careless of what whirlwinds may follow his words. Hitler is a Marc Antony, who can change minds with a speech, but seems recklessly disregardful of the ultimate results. Thus time brings about its revenges on the proneness of the human race to choose bad literature for their stimulus in preference to good.

"Subject Culture"

Whether it is more important for teachers to know their subject or to know how to teach it, was discussed at length by M. Ernest Townsend, President of the New Jersey State Normal School, in last Sunday's *Herald Tribune*. It is the old quarrel between subject and object, not easily settled in a democracy that refuses to spend much money on teachers' education, by saying that they should know both. Dr. Townsend is a good debater. He makes out an excellent case for teachers as practitioners in the field of human guidance. What good for them to know, if they cannot impart—if they are unaware of those rules of mental behavior which psychology and pedagogy teach, ignorance of which leaves the teacher helpless before a class that is led to water but will not drink?

The arguments, as he states them, are impressive. But unfortunately the evidence points in a different direction. Grant the value of a psychological training, grant the usefulness of pedagogy, and still it is the born teacher who, in this profession which will always be more art than science, is successful, even without pedagogy. Whereas the products of our normal schools must be judged, as a recent article in *The Atlantic Monthly* maintained, by the fruits of their teaching, with results most damaging to all concerned.

And does anyone know his object who does not know his subject? English is the medium of all our teaching. Should not a sound knowledge of the language precede even pedagogy and psychology? There is surely something wrong with a system that permits Dr. Townsend, a teacher of teachers, to write "There are some who would deplore this controversy, in spite of the fact that . . . constant improvement in the status of teachers has transpired." Or to produce such a tumor upon expression as: "General culture represented by subject-matter offerings is increasingly subjected to appropriate refinement, including investment with professional implication."

As Caesar said of Antony, one does not much dislike the matter, but the manner of his speech. All hail to pedagogy; but if we have "serious-minded scholars laying themselves open to just criticism through their unwitting acquiescence to the belief that [people can teach] with only the insights gained in the undirected acquisition of subject culture," surely we have normal school presidents proving that they can lay down the law without having really mastered that medium indispensable for all teaching the language itself? Perhaps the methodologists have dropped their "subject culture" too soon!

Ten Years Ago

"Which Way Parnassus?" a discussion of American education by Percy Marks, was reviewed by C. W. Mendell in a late Fall issue of The Saturday Review in 1926. The reviewer felt that the book was aimed only at those *"who enjoy hearing the difficulties and shortcomings of colleges elaborated,"* and concluded that it contained little that was new. Percy Marks had previously (1924) written "The Plastic Age," a novel of college life.

Today

On page 7 of this issue, William Rose Benét reviews Percy Marks's new novel, "A Tree Grown Straight." Mr. Benét writes: *"Mr. Marks's strongest suit is his description of adolescence. It is not for nothing that his former 'The Plastic Age' attracted attention. This author knows what impressionable youth is up against."*

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Letters to the Editor: *Cooper and the Schools; Santayana and Amiel*

Cooper Memorial

SIR:—For a long time, I have felt that we should do something in a substantial way to show the Board of Education that we appreciate the fact that they have named several Public Schools in honor of American men and women who have attained fame as writers.

With this in view, I found a few friends who still remember the thrills they experienced in their boyhood in the reading and rereading of the Leather Stocking Tales of Cooper. So I raised a little fund and we have purchased a bronze tablet of about 26 x 56 inches in which will be set a portrait of Cooper done on bronze and etched in 24-K gold, and in coöperation with and with the enthusiastic approval of Dr. George J. Ryan, President of the Board of Education, this tablet will be erected in the James Fenimore Cooper Junior High School at 116th Street west of 5th Avenue, and we hope to have it dedicated about March first.

It appears to me altogether fitting that we should make this acknowledgement of Cooper's position in American literature because I was not only greatly surprised but impressed in some of my foreign travels to find that the Leather Stocking Tales are perhaps the best known and often the only known American fiction in many of the countries where one would least expect it; such as Persia, Turkey, Russia, and the Orient.

I hope that the dedication of the tablet will deserve and receive much general publicity, and it will naturally follow easily that we can erect similar memorials to Edgar Allan Poe and half a dozen others in schools that are already named, and then recommend to the Board of Education the naming of still more schools after American writers.

MARK O. PRENTISS.

Mr. Prentiss informs us that since writing this letter he has formed a sponsoring committee for the Cooper Memorial which includes Van Wyck Brooks, Christopher Morley, William McFee, Edward Hungerford, Will Irwin, Lowell Thomas, William Lyon Phelps, James Thurber, Harry Elmer Barnes, Robert E. Spiller, with Henry Seidel Canby as chairman.

An American Amiel

SIR:—I am prompted to observe how strange it is that no critic or reviewer has seen the similitude of "The Last Puritan" to Amiel's "Journal Intime." Oliver Alden more nearly resembles in his soul struggles, in the tyranny which his intellect exerts upon him, it appears to me, Henry Frederic Amiel, than the hero of "The Way of All Flesh" or even of "Marius the Epicurean," though the similitude in these latter cases is not inapt. Though no critic has so described him, Oliver is an American Amiel, unable to reconcile the life of thought with the life of action. He was affected with what Gautier, years ago in the *Mercure de France*, was pleased to describe as *la maladie d'Idéal*, another manifestation of which Gautier described as "Bovarysisme," with what affinity is evident.

Oliver is a Protestant Puritan, as was Amiel, for there are acknowledgedly Catholic Puritans, too, of a different stripe. Oliver lacks the intellectual, but not the emotional tolerance of Amiel. He has his same sensuous response to nature and beauty, but Oliver was less reclusal than Amiel. He saved himself by complete retreat from the reality which Oliver was too little able to face or effect. Amiel's retreat saved him, at least corporeally. Oliver destroyed himself by continuous attempt to orient himself to conditions. Amiel shunned them, and dreamed.

ANNE WHELAN.

New Haven, Conn.

"LET'S GO SOMEWHERE QUIETER. THAT BASSOON IS MAKING A HELL OF A NOISE."

Addenda to Literature: Number 7

Daniel D. Home

SIR: I am engaged on a critical study of the career of Daniel Dunglas Home, the spiritualist, who died in 1886. I should be very grateful for any material, letters, or portraits, which will be returned.

HORACE WYNDHAM.

2 Whitehall Court,
London, England.

The Author of "Prue and I"

SIR: About two years ago your column kindly carried a notice of my proposed critical biography of George W. Curtis, American essayist, orator, and civil service reformer of the nineteenth century.

I was surprised at the warm response on the part of lovers of Curtis from Massachusetts to Iowa, many of whom sent me unpublished letters and other data of Mr. Curtis. Since I am using this proposed biography as a Ph.D. dissertation, I am anxious to make the research as thorough as possible. Would you be kind enough to request again for me any unpublished letters of the author of "Prue and I" or other material that could be used by me? I assure your readers that any material placed at my disposal will be preserved and returned to the owners.

FRANKLIN T. WALKER.

Mississippi College,
Clinton, Miss.

William Morris

SIR:—The undersigned is engaged in the preparation of a book on William Morris and begs the hospitality of your columns to inquire whether some of your readers may be in possession of unpublished letters or clippings, or out of print pamphlets, containing statements relative to Mr. Morris's views concerning socialism, anarchism, or communism—or to his relations with socialists, anarchists, and communists. If so, possibly some arrangements could be made to secure copies of the material.

LLOYD WENDELL ESHLEMAN.

121 East 77th Street,
New York City.

William James Linton

SIR: I am at present preparing a biographical study of William James Linton, wood-engraver and poet of the nineteenth century. I should greatly appreciate hearing from any persons who may have correspondence or other original material relating to him in connection with his political or artistic or literary work.

FRASER NEIMAN.

192 Upland Road,
Cambridge, Mass.

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Notes for an Autobiography

PREFACE TO THE PAST. By James Branch Cabell. New York: Robert M. McBride & Co. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by BEN RAY REDMAN

FROM this volume, fittingly and heart-warmingly dedicated to Guy Holt, we may learn as much as the author wishes us to know of the history of the making of James Branch Cabell's books. We may read also of their adventures as completed manuscripts, and of their fates after publication. In these pages, too, some persons may enjoy their first encounter with Mr. Cabell's often reiterated theories regarding his own literary practice, while other persons will contemplate those same theories for perhaps the twentieth time. Lastly, we find here numerous passages in which the author has his characteristic say about other authors, about publishers, magazine editors, censors, reviewers, and about diverse aspects of the literary life as it is lived in America. Here, then, are notes for the autobiography of a man of letters,—facts, figures, explanations, reminiscences, and opinions; but not a whole autobiography by any means, for no more is told of the man than is essential to the tale of his writings.

This is a new book only in the sense that it is newly compounded, and addressed to a more numerous body of readers than can be reached by an expensive, limited edition running to many volumes. It is "made up largely of the revised and edited prefaces to the Storisende edition of the 'Biography of the Life of Manuel,'" to which have been added a few germane papers elsewhere published. Indeed, its only hitherto unprinted portion is the nine-page "Addenda as to Jurgen," in which Burton Rascoe is blandly chided for having made public, without permission, a confidential letter written by Jurgen's creator in 1919.

James Branch Cabell's readers are well acquainted with his insistence (here renewed) that the novels, short stories, essays, poems, book reviews, genealogy, and drama which compose the eighteen volumes of the Storisende edition are a "Biography" of the life of Manuel, as that life found expression through Manuel himself and through his descendants, during seven centuries and twenty-three generations, in several countries and in many places "not yet enregistered upon our stodgily backward school maps," nor, indeed, upon any maps save those sketched by an author's imagination. The Biography, we are told, is chiefly concerned with three attitudes towards life, or with three tentative solutions of the problem of existence—the chivalrous, the gallant, and the poetic—as they are manifest in the continuing and multiplying life of Manuel. Fundamentally the protagonist does not change from book to book, but remains "very much the same blundering male ape, reft of his tail and grown rusty at climbing." In no matter what incarnation, he comes at last to "the same comedic ending upon, at happiest, a resignatory question mark." And this eternal repetition is "the strong connecting thread of the Biography, just as this same eternal repetition has given solidarity to all human living ever since men first discovered those three great commonplaces which are called love and marriage and death."

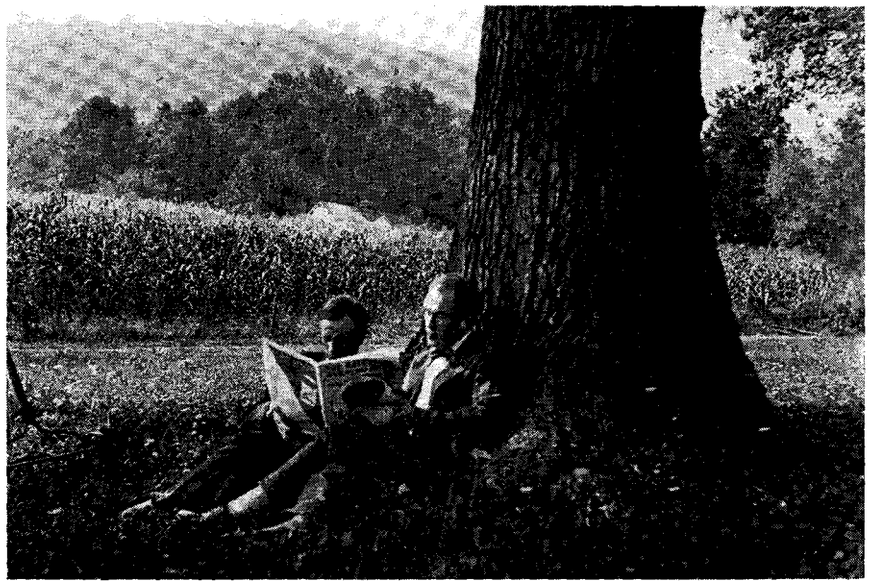
It is an author's amusing fancy, you may say, this pretending that so many volumes of miscellaneous writing are really a single book, planned and of a piece. Surely, the conception was not in young Mr. Cabell's mind when, at the beginning of the century, he began to write romantic stories to be illustrated by Howard Pyle? Doubtless it was not, nor for long afterward. But the fancy has been translated into something very like substantial fact by dint of twenty-eight years of active creation and cunning tinkering. That Mr. Cabell did not suspect he was Manuel's biographer when he composed "The Line of Love" and other volumes, and that he had later to rewrite and reshape those books so that they would fit into his total scheme, does not stultify his view of his own work. Nor does it matter just when or why, or how tardily, the idea of the Biography came to him. Come it did; and for better or for worse, after his own fashion, and avowedly for his own diversion, he has made that idea real. The reality stands before us, as solid proof that few American authors have labored more devotedly or more ambitiously than James Branch Cabell. One cannot read "Preface to the Past" without trying to evaluate the product of all this labor.

To put it bluntly, Mr. Cabell's reputation is now at a low ebb. It is just as unfashionable to admire his books today as it was fashionable to admire them a few years ago. All the silly people who pride themselves upon their immediately correct response to the latest best-seller, all the reviewers who hop on and off bandwagons with an agility that betokens a ligthness of mind as well as of limb, have learned to dismiss any reference to Cabell and his works with a shrug. He is old stuff. Even worse, to many his name recalls an enthusiasm that can be remembered only with embarrassment.

For an author to lose the suffrage of such readers is no loss at all. But there are other readers and critics, of unquestionable sincerity and intelligence, to whom the name of Cabell is anathema. Eloquent among them is Granville Hicks. In "The Great Tradition," he has written:

> The artist has a function in this mad world, Mr. Cabell argues; it is to create beautiful illusions, which alone make life endurable. But, far from occupying himself with the dissemination of dynamic lies, Mr. Cabell has devoted all his talents to attacking men's illusions. He is, then, a fraud; in fact, he is doubly a fraud, for neither his romanticism nor his pessimism is genuine. He is a sleek, smug egoist, whose desire to be a gentleman of the old school breeds dissatisfaction with the existing order, but who has not enough imaginative vigor to create a robust world in which deeds of chivalry and gallantry are performed.

These are harsh words, and they have a surprisingly Calvinistic ring; surprisingly, until one remembers that Marxism resembles Calvinism both in fervor and intolerance, and that the one is as strict as the other in delimiting the pleasures and thinking of the faithful. It is not remarkable that Mr. Hicks, as a Marxist,



SINCLAIR LEWIS AND JAMES BRANCH CABELL

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should be moved to violent language; but it is remarkable that anyone so intelligent should not recognize that Mr. Cabell, by combining romanticism and pessimism in his own person, is the very type and prolocutor of the aspiring human animal. Neither the one element nor the other is fraudulent; and the literary artist who creates (or yearns after) illusions, only to destroy them, is merely performing, articulately, an act that countless millions are condemned to perform inarticulately. It is, too, evidence of myopia upon Mr. Hicks's part that he should think that Mr. Cabell's "dissatisfaction" is with "the existing order," rather than with the order of human life that has always existed and probably always will exist,—the order which is cut through by the great gulf that separates promise from fulfilment, aspiration from accomplishment, illusion from realization.

Plainly, at the moment, Mr. Cabell is out of luck and out of season. On the one hand, he has been deserted by those who change their fashions in books as they do in clothes, and who once flocked after him for the wrong reasons; and, on the other hand, his undeniably aristocratic and artistic approach to the common human problem has marked him out for rough treatment or neglect by the rising school of proletarian critics. But the aristocratic attitude is a plant of curiously tough fibre, and in the past, as history shows, it has sprung renewed in strength from soils even as strange as communism. It is reasonable to suppose, also, that the writer who deals in symbols expressive of life as men have experienced it in all ages enjoys a better chance of survival than the writer who deals in the toys and tools and bickerings of a transient generation. The poets who now sing of dynamos, factories, and strikes, are happily oblivious of the fate of those poets who once hymned the gas engine, the abolition of the slave trade, and the indubitably healthy but newly discovered circulation of the blood.

To accuse Mr. Cabell, as some critics do, of not being concerned with reality and with human problems, is to have a strangely perverted idea of reality and of man's sojourn on earth. Is the class struggle (which, we are assured, will one day be ended) more real than the eternal struggle between romanticism and pessimism in the spirit of man? More real than the tragedy which makes men ever cherish illusions and assist at their destruction? More real than those three great commonplaces which are called love and marriage and death? It is of these things that James Branch Cabell has written. And to some of us, using as best we may the critical eyes of a contemporary, it seems that he has written in a style rightly fashioned to his matter: a style that is fit for bitter irony, for the romantic posturing natural to man, for poetic dreams, and for the resignation that common sense at last prescribes.

RICHARD BLAKER

Adventurer's Wife

HERE LIES A MOST BEAUTIFUL LADY. By Richard Blaker. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by DOROTHEA KINGSLAND

THE personalities in this novel take you by storm. You gasp with admiration at "Gentleman John," quondam fur trader, speculator, and oil king, English adventurer par excellence, as he battles his way to success with eternal masculine self-confidence. You gasp again with sympathy for Hester, his gentle, Victorian wife, holding herself apart from the world, John's world, that she may see it more clearly and enjoy it the better. You gasp again with amazement at their child, the volcanic young goddess, the irrepressible Beryl. And as you marvel, you whisper under your breath: This is all very true. For John Billiter, whom no savage trader or wily business man could stump, is felled by a breezy governess, and Beryl's brimming vitality is threatened by slanderous tongues, and it is Hester, simple and unimportant Hester, who unshackles these two and not only these two but all who concern them so that they may lead their own lives. To Hester, after years of watchfulness, the peace of others has become more precious than her own desire.

The author obviously adores his "most beautiful lady" and has laid this book in tribute at her feet. He has cut down the huge canvas that unrolled before the eyes of John Billiter to the narrow range of Hester's clear vision. He has felt her pulse with peculiarly masculine tenderness. Sometimes it seems as if the ethereal Hester might swoon away in self-effacement, but then he breathes life back into her lips with lungs as lusty as those of Gentleman John, himself. His book is an extraordinary combination of swift, vibrating narrative and slow, tense, controlled conversations oddly reminiscent of Henry James. It is at once boisterous and facetious, thoughtful and tender. It is as convincing as a biography.

Gypsy Blood

I MET A GYPSY. By Norah Lofts. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by L. CABOT HEARN

THIS new and suave English writer seems to say to us that once you have a dash of gypsy blood in the family, descendants through five centuries will exhibit strange and exciting characteristics. Her extremely readable novel is a series of family portraits of the Winfarthings—chiefly of the women—in their successive predicaments.

The thesis of this book is of no particular significance, but the writing—always in the first person, through the mind and lips of one narrator or another—has great relish. In the chain of episodes, it is natural that some should appeal to any particular reader more than others. There is no question that, as well as liking to write about the past, Miss Lofts has a decided knack for the idiom of different periods.

As for the thread on which are strung these beads of dramatic situation—that is introduced by the gypsy's daughter who stole the alms-bag of the convent during the casting forth of the nuns in the reign of Henry Tudor and established a coastwise inn, the Great Harry, which figures in most of the succeeding tales. The three nineteenth century stories that rise (1800) and stem from it (1830 and 1870) are to me the richest and most dramatic of the volume. In fact they are the work of a notable romancer. But one is not by any means confined to the Norfolk Coast in this book. One is swiftly as far afield as Guinea for black slaves and, by way of contrast, among the Northern whalers of Leisburg—to say nothing of India and China in the end.

Certainly one could not compare this book with so superb a volume of stories as "Seven Gothic Tales," for instance. It cannot measure up to that standard at all. But its neat and vivid vignettes stick in the memory nevertheless. Norah Lofts is a name I shall look for hereafter.

NORAH LOFTS

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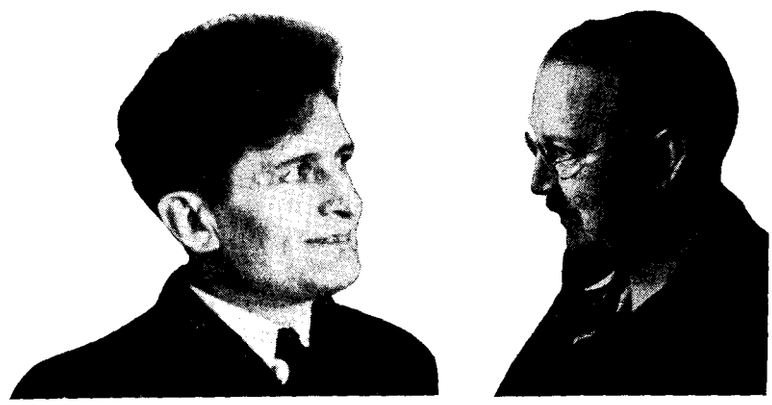
Parties and Platforms: *Visiting Lecturers in Disraeli News Pictures*

Poet Laureate John Masefield thinks over his lecture at the Town Hall in New York. Mr. Masefield is on his way to England after a short visit to Hollywood. His latest book is a sea story, "Victorious Troy."

Salvador de Madariaga (left, inset), Spanish representative at the League of Nations, meets Columbia Professor James T. Shotwell...

. . . The occasion is a dinner given February 21 by the Committee on International Intellectual Coöperation, of which Mr. Shotwell is Chairman. Señor de Madariaga's new book, "Anarchy or Hierarchy," is to be published soon.

Irina Skariatina, author of "First to Go Back" and "A World Can End," tells another Town Hall audience what she saw in Soviet Russia. Mme. Skariatina was the first Russian aristocrat to return to the U. S. S. R. She is now married to an American naval officer, and lives near Philadelphia.



More Town Hall lecturers are Maurice Hindus, Russian commentator (left); and Dr. Howard W. Haggard (right), whose new book, "The Anatomy of Personality," is coming next week . . . And below (left), Caroline Miller, who won the Pulitzer Prize for her novel, "Lamb in His Bosom" (1933), answers a question in the greenroom after the lecture.

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The Bowling Green by Christopher Morley

Toulemonde Desipient

IN this life so slippery
Dulce est desipere.
What are the joys of men?
Enumerate them, then.

Ink that runs from the pen
And forms unbidden the desiderate word;
Scraps of conversation overheard;
Swimming after sweat;
Driving a car;
Remembering the name of one unexpectedly met;
The first cocktail at the bar.
The first warm sun in March;
Collars without starch;
Finding a rare edition;
The dawning dim suspicion
That dame likes me: I think we might go far.

Making a full house from a pair;
Not listening to comedians on the air.

Among the pleasures particularly man's
Are: mushroom soup in cans;
Old brown shoes well shined;
The laughter hidden in the mind;
Days when everything seems funny;
The return of long-loaned money;
Full appreciation of some art
(Whether hockey or Hokusai);
A bad cold nursed with rock-and-rye;
Perversely hitching the horse behind the cart;
Believing in your soul
The part is greater than the whole.

The joy of being warm
By firelight on a night of storm;
Moonlight when it stipples
Long Island Sound in ripples.

The footlights glowing on the curtain
On a First Night of your own;
Remembering, though uncertain,
A number on the phone;
Books on which there's a hoodoo
Because no one likes them as well as you do,
Or very few do.

The fun that people miss
By being prim and priss
(Also the snags they strike
By doing too much what they like);
Morning papers and orange juice on breakfast tables;
The almost vanished smell of livery stables;
Engines that go by steam
(For pistons and cranks,
Oh Lord, my thanks);
The curiosities of dream;
An unexpected Valentine;
Spaghetti and red wine.

Hot towels at the barber's;
Tea and bread-and-butter in English arbors;
Falling asleep with a detective story
(One that's both intelligent and gory).

The feeling of a day when nothing has to be done:
No appointments, absolutely none,
Just to loiter along the shelves
Reintegrating all one's various selves;
And then, when everyone's in bed,
The silence overhead.

His blue morocco slippers donned,
What evenings then had Toulemonde.

Coincidences

SIR: A propos your last paragraph in the Green, February 15, that same week I was rereading Miss Mitford's *Letters,* edited by R. Brimley Johnson (London, 1925) and M. R. M.'s Letters to James T. Fields in his *Yesterdays with Authors.* Also *Our Village,* in the People's Library, Cassell & Co., London, 1919. This I bought at the Davenant Book Shop, 2 and 3 Turl Street, Oxford, after having lunch at the Mitre, on January 2, 1926. Price 1/3.

Just a coincidence. But it was the second one. On Feb. 1st you mentioned Cowper's Letters. I had laid them down to read the SRL which had just been received. I. N.

Washington, D. C.

Speaking of the kind of reading one enjoys most, I was rummaging again in *Laughter from a Cloud,* a posthumous collection of writings in lighter vein by the late Sir Walter Raleigh (I mean the Sir Walter of our own day). I quote the sestet of his excellent sonnet *I Never Cared for Literature As Such:—*

One book among the rest is dear to me;
As when a man, having tired himself in deed
Against the world, and, falling back to write,
Sated with love, or crazed by vanity,
Or drunk with joy, or maimed by Fortune's spite,
Sets down his Paternoster and his Creed.

The Phoenician, Mr. William Rose Benét, recently celebrated his semi-centennial birthday while on a lecture trip in the Middle West. In reply to a telegram of congratulation from his colleagues he wrote describing his birthday adventure: riding down the west bank of the Mississippi from Burlington to St. Louis. He wrote with enthusiasm:—

"It was the *Mark Twain Zephyr,* one of those new streamlined, stainless steel Diesel-powered trains. It was like a trip out of H. G. Wells. Ought to be a poem on it:

Down the Mississippi, powered by Diesel,
Boy did we go zippy?
Slick as a weasel!"

Professor Charles S. Osgood writes from Princeton that there are some disadvantages in Dr. Johnson's bookcase measurements, which L. M. B. wished to duplicate. (Bowling Green, Feb. 1). Professor Osgood says:—

"I built bookshelves according to Johnson's specifications, to hold my Eighteenth Century books, and found to my dismay that there was no place, except on the floor level, for the modern tall octavo books (except the shelves obviously provided for the folios). The 18th century octavo was not so tall as ours. L. M. B. may wish to revise the specifications in view of this point."

To Mark Twain

SIR:—You asked someone to look up Owen Seaman's poem on the death of Mark Twain—here 'tis:

Pilot of many pilgrims since the shout
"Mark Twain!"—that serves you for a deathless sign
On Mississippi's waterway rang out
Over the Plummet's line!
Still where the countless ripples laugh above
The blue of halcyon seas, long may you keep
Your cause unbroken, buoyed upon a love
Ten thousand fathoms deep!

This poem was first published in *Punch,* and later reprinted in the English *Bookman*—June 1910.

GENE BOARDMAN HOOVER.

Kansas City.

Mr. W. J. Crawford, Jr., of Cleveland submits as viaticum for cold weather the State of Maine recipe given him by Kenneth Roberts for

Hot Buttered Rum

The ingredients and proportions for a single glass of hot buttered rum are about as follows:

Pour hot water into a tumbler to warm it. Throw out the water: drop in a lump of sugar: add a couple teaspoonsful of hot water and dissolve the sugar. Put in a slug of rum, any size you want. Add a pat of butter the size of the single pats you get in a restaurant. Dust in some powdered cinnamon—maybe a third of a teaspoonful. Add as much more hot water as you want and give it a good stirring. Then it's ready to drink.

If you're mixing for a lot, you don't

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need to be meticulous. Put some hot water in a pitcher, a chunk of butter, sugar to taste, pour in your rum, add the cinnamon and stir. Individual tastes differ. I like about half and half rum and water; then take the drinks small, like cocktails. Maybe you'll like 'em longer. With a small amount of water, it's a wicked drink, because it sticks with you a long, long time.

The worst of rums taste very smooth and harmless when thus treated.

And a Postscript

(For Dr. Charles Goodman, D.D.S.)

All joys I bless, but I confess
There is one greatest thrill:
What the dentist does when he stops the buzz
And puts away the drill.

His engine hums along my gums
Its excavating drone,
I salivate and gurgling wait
Vibrating to the bone.

Oh will he save this tooth concave
Or will he now decide
To grind away some more decay?
He murmurs, *Open wide.*

So I must feel the burring steel,
The hot and fragile twinge
And mutely bide till he push aside
The bracket on its hinge.

But will he swerve toward that nerve?
I wonder, gagged, agape:
He sees me gulp and spares the pulp—
My God, a close escape!

The creosote is in my throat,
I weep against my will;
My nostrils itch, sensation which
I can't relieve until
He stops the buzz and packs in fuzz
And puts away the drill.

I grant the bliss of love's warm kiss
Or wealth, or fame, or skill:
These I esteem but yet I deem
There is one greater thrill—
When he stops the buzz, as at last he does,
And puts away the drill!

Blunder on the Left

SIR:—There is an answer to your parenthetical question in the Bowling Green of a few weeks ago: "(but why is the ink on the left side, where, to dip the quill, the Saint's long trailing sleeve must smear over the wet manuscript?)."

The ink-pot is on the left, and Dürer was right.

"Anchorites deep in scrivening" usually held the ink-pot in the left, dipping as they scrived, to guard against dropping ink or pigment on the precious vellum. To rest the hand at times, the scrivener had only to set the ink-pot down on the desk *at his left.* There was no danger, therefore, of smears made by the "long trailing sleeves" of the worker. For the same reason the ink-pot was round, to fit the hand; it is usually so shown in early engravings and illuminations.

Take a look, if you will, at another of Dürer's famous works, "Erasmus of Rotterdam" (1526). Here see Erasmus holding the ink-pot *in his left hand* as he writes. A striking example—as earlier proof—will be found in the magnificent manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, which contains an illumination showing Jean Mielot, scribe to the Duke of Burgundy, working on a manuscript at The Hague (1456), with three round ink-pots *at his left*—likely for black, red and blue. There exist many other examples to prove that Dürer did not nod.

T. HENRY FOSTER.

Ottumwa, Iowa.

It Happened in Rome

(*Continued from page 4*)

cero's day the men were different, and the old customs survived, for the most part, only in hollow forms that were useful to no one but the rich who wanted to stand pat.

Miss Bentley, enthusiast for liberty that she is, perceives this too. Her Brutus, just before his suicide, puts into words her reasons for the fall of the Republic. (Hers, not his; the historical Brutus, if Plutarch was well informed, devoted his last moments to pleasing contemplation of his own virtues, and the iniquity of his enemies.) Her summary is ruthless and comprehensive: "The arrogance and stupidity of the patricians, the selfishness of the wealthy, the timidity, confusion, and delay of the moderate well-meaning men, the greed and fickleness and stupidity of the people." Here was a "concordia ordinum" of a very different sort from that imagined by Cicero; one was just as bad as another; they were altogether become filthy; there was none of them that was good, no, not one.

"The fundamental forces," said Mommsen, "are everywhere alike," and about the only concordia ordinum that our republic can display in these days is painfully like that discerned by Miss Bentley. It will be gathered from the foregoing that the writer is one who deplores the effect of some recent decisions of the Supreme Court, with the notable exception of the TVA case—not least their effect on the Constitution, which can hardly gain in the esteem of any but constitutional lawyers if it is to be construed as a document whose chief function is the protection of intrenched wealth. But if you hold that the Court should put more trust in the wisdom and patriotism of Congress, you must contemplate the recent and conspicuous display of that reason and patriotism in the passage of the Bonus Act. There were sound arguments for the giving of a bonus in 1919, and the lapse of time, perhaps, does not extinguish the obligation; but nobody supposes either that the soundness of the arguments had anything to do with the passage of the bill, or that if the veterans had got the

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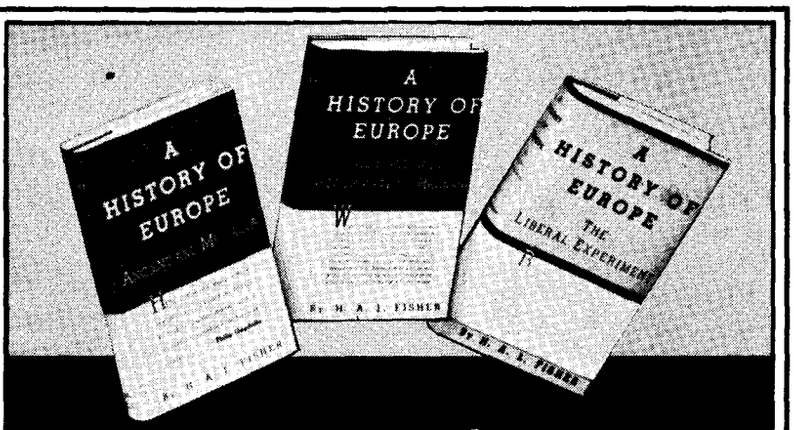
bonus in 1919 when they deserved it, their leaders would not be demanding—and getting—something else from Congress now. "Enrich the soldiers and never mind the rest," Septimius Severus advised his sons. Those at least were active soldiers, with arms in their hands; but the average Congressman is just as much afraid of an ex-soldier with a ballot in his hand. Who is there, indeed, that the average Congressman is not afraid of? Idiots, perhaps, and imbeciles, and Indians not taxed.

And the Roman proletariat? "Bribed by money, corn, or games," says Miss Bentley, "and too susceptible to mere eloquence." Are the followers of Father Coughlin and Huey Long, the devotees of the Townsend Plan, an improvement, after two thousand years of evolution? It is worth noting that the most durable of the reforms of the Gracchi, the one measure of theirs that remained a part of the Roman system of government right down to the end of the Empire, was the distribution of food to the city poor; once the people of Rome got on relief they never got off. Relief may have been as necessary in the days of the second Gracchus as it was in those of the second Roosevelt; but relief as a permanent policy means that there is something wrong with either the economic system or the backbone of the government, or with both. Meanwhile, when lately a heavy snowfall in New York was followed by a day of zero weather, thousands of recipients of relief who were supposed to work as snow shovellers came out, made acquaintance with the weather, and went back home to live on relief. No doubt these were in the main the worst fed and worst clad element of the population; but the incident gave food for thought to a good many New Yorkers who had grown up in a society where you did the work that had to be done, and if you had to do it in uncomfortably cold weather, that was your bad luck. The implications of this episode, and of the Roman frumentary laws, are prayerfully commended to the next Republican president; who will have to continue relief, no matter what he promised contributors to his campaign fund. The fundamentals are alike, says Mommsen, the combinations are different. With all respect to the thinkers of the American Liberty League, the situation of this republic is not yet anywhere near as desperate as that of the Roman Republic in the days of which Miss Bentley writes; and if it grows more desperate, that is likely to be partly the fault of the American Liberty League. None the less, it is disquieting to reflect that one of the most salient differences between the Roman situation and ours is that our popular party has no leader anywhere in sight with anything like the abilities of Caesar or of Augustus.

Elmer Davis, well known as a journalist and novelist, is a former teacher of ancient history.



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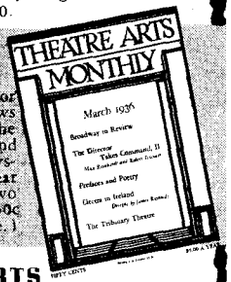

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The PHŒNIX NEST

CONTEMPORARY POETRY: BY WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

I AM in receipt of many anthologies of undergraduate work and of many regional anthologies. Poems culled from among the aspiring of Greenwich Village (there is one such anthology) are no better and no worse than poems by Missouri students (the title of another) or the anthology dubbed "Texas Legacy." Of course my friend *Henry Harrison* is probably the greatest publisher of regional poetry in the known world. His latest batch to me consists of Colorado poets, Oregon poets, Indiana poets, Arkansas and Oklahoma poets, and Maine and Vermont poets. Holy smoke! Now you get a man like *Thomas Hornsby Ferril* out in Colorado, *Frances Frost* hails from Vermont, *Harold Pulsifer* and *Harold Vinal* are Down Easterners, *Howard McKinley Corning* is an Oregonian, no less a poet than *E. Merrill Root* writes an excellent foreword for the Indiana book, and so on—but nevertheless there's precious little you can read in these volumes that really impresses. There's better stuff, on the whole, in a quite huge three dollar anthology of "Contemporary American Women Poets" from the same publisher, edited by *Tooni Gordi* (whoever that is) and issued under the auspices of *The Spinners: A Bi-Monthly of Women's Verse.* None of these poems has appeared in any anthology before. Some of the first names one happens on are *Muriel Rukeyser* (the most promising young woman poet of the day), *Sarah N. Cleghorn, Katherine Garrison Chapin, Elsa Gidlow, Marjorie Allen Seiffert, Marion Canby, Sara Bard Field, Amanda Benjamin Hall, Margaret Widdemer,* etc. So this book goes into my poetry bookcase for its reference value. But when it comes to an anthology of Lithuanian and Latvian Folk-Songs, I feel that such are more for the scholar's study than for this department; and, as it is, there are many volumes of all kinds crowding the shelves.

Regional presses are busy. Coming to me from Bristow, Oklahoma are the Coronado Chapbooks, featuring the sonnets of *Anne McClure* and the poems "Young Man's Country" of *Henry T. Chambers.* This Press, not unlike others, is the venture of a printer who publishes books for southwestern poets just above cost. Then there's such an experiment as *Floyd McKnight's,* in "Buildings: A Philosophic Meditation in Verse." He has organized the Arts and Press Guild, hoping to demonstrate how writers and artists with the courage of their convictions may bring their works before the public in spite of unfavorable economic conditions. His own work has won the praise of *Anna Hempstead Branch* and *John Hall Wheelock.* His illustrated book is interesting to me, but no more. Small presses abound. There is, for instance, The Service Press at The Hague, and so *Brownell Carr's* verses have the distinction of being printed in Holland, though some of them originally appeared in *The New Yorker.* The little book is called "The Pirate's Knife."

At this point, as a strange interlude, I may impart my utter astonishment at just receiving from California a small pamphlet "Cecil B. deMille: Screen-Prophet and Cinema Apostle," accompanied by the following letter from the author, *Charles Woessner:*

> I am asking all American Poets to read my enclosed copy on Cecil B. deMille.
>
> Please pen a poem depicting the efforts of Mr. deMille as shown in the brochure.
>
> I know Mr. deMille personally. These poems are to be an appreciation gift of his work.
>
> Grant me permission to print your poem.

That is "tops," so far, in my correspondence files of 1936! The brochure, which I have glanced at, is pretty swell too!

One of the poets with a real talent for painting and drawing is *Anthony Euwer,* whose "By Scarlet Torch and Blade" illustrated by himself, is now published by the Metropolitan Press of Portland, Oregon. Vermont has the Stephen Daye Press at Brattleboro and the Driftwind Press at Montpelier. The former has just published *Angelo Marco's* "Moon in the City" and the latter *J. Graydon Jeffries's* "Miniature Cortège." Better than either is *Mabel Posegate's* "Once When Arcturus Shone" from the Stephen Daye Press. Order from your bookseller or from Mrs. Posegate at 3637 Ault Park Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio.

I have formerly praised several books from the Writers' Editions of Santa Fé, New Mexico. Now here's *Spud Johnson's* "Horizontal Yellow." (That is what the Navajo calls the West!) These are poems distinctly of locale. "Arms, Angels, Epitaphs and Bones" by *William Davey,* from the same source, would seem to be pretty comprehensive. The Kaleidograph Press, 702 North Vernon Street, Dallas, Texas, furnishes some good unpretentious verse by a well-known Westerner, in "Level Land" by *Kenneth C. Kaufman,* and *Fay McCormick Yauger's* "Planter's Charm" as well. *Robin Lampson* (He of the long narrative poem of the '49ers, "Laughter out of the Earth," recently published by Scribner's) has his "Terza Rima Sonnets" printed and published by *Wilder Bentley* at the Archetype Press at Berkeley, California. Lampson is worth watching. The Alpress of 1321 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, has attractively issued "Danse Macabre" by *Frank Ankenbrand, Jr.,* a kind of radical poetry that seems to me worth very little. Printed by *Richard Ellis* at the Davidson Press, New York, is *Marion Brown Shelton's* "Pointed Ear, and Other Poems." Some good workmanship here! And the Primavera Press of Los Angeles sponsors *Leetha Journey Probst's* "Steeps of Dawn."

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Human Relations

CRITERIA FOR THE LIFE HISTORY WITH ANALYSES OF SIX NOTABLE DOCUMENTS. By John Dollard. New Haven: Institute of Human Relations, Yale University Press. 1935. $2.50.

Reviewed by HORACE M. KALLEN

TO judge by this book, the Institute of Human Relations down at New Haven is reliving the experience of one M. Jourdain set down in a play of Molière's. M. Jourdain found great illumination in the discovery that he spoke prose. Mr. Dollard exhibits in a Ph.D. way a similar *éclaircissement* at the idea that human relations are relations between individuals, and that consequently to know social causes as they actually operate is to know individuals. What Mr. Dollard calls "the life history" is a way of stating knowledge about an individual. Being "scientific," he believes that there is one best way of stating this knowledge. His "criteria" are the differentiæ of this perfect way. He enumerates seven, *viz:* (1) The subject must be viewed as a specimen in a cultural series; (2) the organic motors of action ascribed must be socially relevant; (3) the peculiar role of the family group in transmitting the culture must be recognized; (4) the specific method of elaboration of organic materials into social behavior must be shown; (5) the continuous related character of experience from childhood through adulthood must be stressed; (6) the "social situation" must be carefully and continuously specified as a factor; (7) the life-history material itself must be organized and conceptualized.

Much of his book is talk about papers by Alfred Adler, Jessie Taft, Freud, Thomas and Znaniecki, Clifford Shaw, and H. G. Wells in the light of these "criteria." He reproaches those who in his judgment have failed to employ them all.

To which one can only say "as you like it." I myself don't. I find that Mr. Dollard does not deviate from the traditional punditry of the field. He both labors the obvious and obscures it with professorial writing. It seems to me bad sense as well as bad logic to reproach any one for failing to do what he would have done if he had been somebody else doing something different. Criteria can be extrinsic or intrinsic. Extrinsically they are the consequences of an idea or a method. Intrinsically they are its logical structure —its clearness and distinctness, its consistency and economy. It is possible for a system or a method to be intrinsically perfect and extrinsically barren, or extrinsically rich and fertile and intrinsically defiant of all logics. So far as life-histories are concerned, there are fifty-seven ways of constructing sociological laws and every single one of them is right. The choice between them is esthetic and sectarian, not scientific and consequential. Adler and Freud, for example, whom Mr. Dollard finds less perfect, measured by his "criteria," than Thomas and Znaniecki, have thus far been far more fertile in consequences. Apart from consequences, the issue is *de gustibus.*

Horace M. Kallen is lecturer in the New School for Social Research.

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Norah Hoult

The Critics are Showering Praise on her new novel, HOLY IRELAND

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—*Philadelphia Record.*

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—*Dublin Magazine.*

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A common-sense plan By Gilbert M. Tucker. $2.50 PUTNAM'S

The New Books

Fiction

BUTCHER BIRD. By Reuben Davis. Little, Brown. 1936. $2.50.

Max Beerbohm pointed out a long time ago that in a world in which a good many people wear masks, it is not half so much fun to unmask the wicked villain as it is to discover that behind the mask of wickedness may lie—anatomy to the contrary notwithstanding—a golden heart. And it is this old charm of coming upon good where evil was to be expected and not his cotton field Negroes, fresh and veracious as they are, that makes "Butcher Bird" of Reuben Davis a volume of delightful entertainment.

Certainly the Negro is no longer a surprising newcomer in the house of American literature. But the truth is, as "Butcher Bird" and numerous other novels of the Negro indicate, that the Negro in our fiction is generally a figure of the sheerest romance. This does not mean that the black man is not often veraciously drawn. Reuben Davis has presented the black community of Caney Point with a clarity and an understanding which makes its individuals stand out in the almost astronomically lengthening gallery of dark portraits in our literature. But it is only necessary to wash the black off the skins of his characters to emphasize the utter, the pleasantly familiar romance of his tale.

A good but stubborn country boy falls in love with a gay young lady from the town, who has returned to the country only because her glint-hard lover is in jail. She accepts the country boy's help and his love with no intent save to serve the cheating of her lover. But, when the country boy comes to town at her call to be robbed by her lover and, instead of being robbed, shoots the city crook with the city crook's own pistol, and takes the girl back to the country, she finds a happiness in decent love she had never known in the old fast company. So when the city crook with his bullet hole healed comes again seeking to profit by the murder of her country boy husband, she puts her body between them and takes the bullet in supreme sacrifice to righteousness and love.

A grand old romantic drama it is. White boys and girls have played it countless times in every costume against every scene. But with Caney Point black folk playing its parts, all of its old dramatic appeal is enhanced by a new company of appealing actors. Mr. Davis knows his cotton field Negroes and how to make them live in print. Quite as important, he knows how as a romantic story teller to tell a good old romantic tale.

J. D.

COOLIE. By Madelon Lulofs. Translated from the Dutch by G. J. Renier and Irene Clephane. Viking. 1936. $2.

This sociological study of a Javanese coolie is an attack on the enforced-labor system that prevailed some twenty years ago in the Dutch East Indies, and to some extent, in less vicious form, continues to exist. The protagonist of the story, lured from his native mountains to the rubber plantations of Deli on the island of Sumatra by false promises of wealth, women, and gambling, finds the actuality a living hell. Coming in violent contact with the civilization of the nineteenth century, he sets about his task of battling the virgin forest in unison with his co-slaves. When his contract is run out, he is all too easily persuaded to sign up again by the flattery of the *mandur* (foreman)—who gets a cut on every contract renewed. And soon poor Ruki, hopelessly in debt, with never a care for the morrow, knows no better than to continue his life of toil, regulated by the white man's *tontong* (gong), an unending succession of tapping and weeding the rubber trees to produce the White Money for his masters. When in the end escape is in sight, his gambling instinct gets the

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
LIBEL *Edward Wooll* (Macrae-Smith: $2.)	**Sir Mark Loddon, accused of being impostor—and worse—by wartime comrades. Was he or was he not?**	Rather ragged writing offset by eventful story, with a puzzling plot, and effective court room scenes.	Entertaining
THE HAVANA HOTEL MURDERS *Frank Dudley* (Houghton Mifflin: $2.)	Head of American commission and Cuban strangely murdered in Havana hostelry. Solution by Dr. Lucas Brush and pretty girl.	Mixture of intrigue, cold-blooded ambition, calm and clever sleuthing, Bacardi rum, romance, and tropic sunshine.	Grade B
DEATH GOES TO SCHOOL *Q. Patrick* (Smith & Haas: $2.)	Murder of students in English boys' school involves staff, pupils, even a Bishop. Teacher and bright boy solve it.	Though slightly unfair in denouement the telling is good, the dialogue bright, and background interesting.	Passable

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better of him and, all his savings lost, he has to sign for another year and a half —for the nineteenth time.

During fifteen years spent in the Indies, Mrs. Szekely-Lulofs has had ample opportunity to study the evils of the contract system at first hand. "Coolie" appeared in Dutch before "The Other World," which preceded it in this country and which paints the reverse side of the picture—the white man's burden. In all her books, which enjoy a great vogue in Holland, Mrs. Lulofs takes a sympathetic stand towards the native whose exploitation she deplores. "Coolie" is a trenchant and sensitive exposition of the problem, and shows her intimate knowledge of the indigenous psychology.

B. F.

ISLAND MAGIC. By Elizabeth Goudje. Coward-McCann. 1936. $2.50.

This novel, whose scene is laid in the still half French Channel Islands, has a curious charm which is partly style and partly the unusual quality of the background. The story is of an old island family rapidly declining into relative poverty, who live in a much loved and extremely ancient house called Bon Repos. It is a story essentially of three very unusual children although the plot, which is a bit artificial, concerns the adults and how they were rescued from what seemed to be the end of Bon Repos. It is not a book that should be too fully described for its quality inheres in the writing and evaporates from a reviewer's account. Indeed this is regional fiction of rather considerable excellence and will be heartily enjoyed by those who seek fresh experiences in their narratives. Some of the characters also, particularly the three children and mother and the servant girl in her more than feudal relationship with the family, deserve high praise. As a first novel, this book deserves attention from connoisseurs.

H. S. C.

Science

THE RESTLESS UNIVERSE. By Max Born. Harpers. 1936. $3.50.

This is a book on physics, not astronomy as its title may suggest; the adjective "restless" is derived from the incessant motions of atoms and electrons and corpuscles of light. Its author is one of the leaders in the mathematical physics of this era, and among these leaders he is one of the few whose careers began before the war. For years he was one of the lights of the great Göttingen school of mathematicians and physicists, now dispersed to the ends of the earth; Born himself has lately taught in Cam-

(*Continued on page* 22)

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 100)

VAN WYCK BROOKS—
"LIFE OF EMERSON."

He took little pleasure in this incense of adulation. He had often mocked Goethe for spending so many hours counting his medals. That velvet life had seemed to him incongruous with genius. . . . Life for him was still absurdly sweet.

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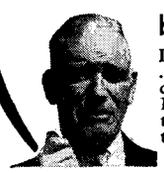
New ASEY MAYO Mystery

The CRIMSON PATCH



by Phoebe Atwood Taylor

Death strikes through a patchwork quilt . . . the crimson patch spreads . . . a pet crow plays bloodhound . . . and Asey Mayo, famous Cape Cod sleuth, is at the top of his form in a case that will baffle the shrewdest reader.

$2 W. W. NORTON & CO.

Death Takes a Holiday

when Carolyn Wells, well-known mystery story writer, starts to work on the weekly *Double-Crostic* in her copy of *The Saturday Review*. Here's a recent letter from Carolyn Wells to the inventor of this exclusive feature:

Dear Mrs. Kingsley:

May I tell you how very much I enjoy your Double-Crostics? I am an experienced worker and maker of puzzles of every sort, but yours are the best ever. I introduced them to a friend, but had to help her out a little with her first one. Now, she is on her own, and can scarcely wait for the next one.

I never leave one unfinished, though sometimes they take nearly two hours. But they're so entertaining. Thank you for them.

Sincerely yours, CAROLYN WELLS.

Have you any friends who are fond of puzzles? If you have, send us their names, and we will gladly send them sample copies of the magazine. Better still—send us a dollar, and we will enter a trial subscription for three months (13 issues). *The Saturday Review*, 25 West 45th St., New York City.

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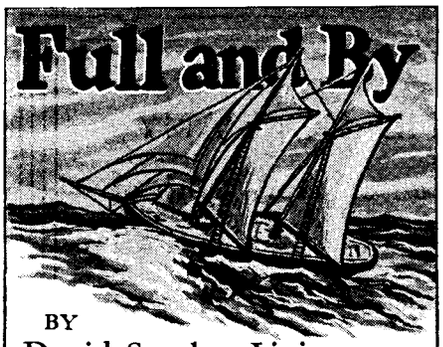

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The Saturday Review's Guide

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Shrewd mixture of amateur criminology and underworld stuff—with a windup that's a knockout!

Verdict—Excellent

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High, Low, Close

AMERICAN BOOK-PRICES CURRENT 1934-1935. *Compiled by Mary Houston Warren. New York: R. R. Bowker Co.* 1936. 700 *copies.* $20.

EVEN the leisure class cannot always be choosers. Any book-auction house is properly willing to put up whatsoever lot will return a profit, but it can transfer only such merchandise as is made available not so much by the industry and ingenuity of its own staff as by due process of nature. Usually, responsive to the law of averages, it is able to offer in any season a little of everything, but never unqualified everything.

Thus, during the season that ended last May (the auction year is virtually coterminous with the school year) you might have been endowed with all the wealth of Ind and yet have whistled to no purpose for a 1913 "Chance," a Japan vellum "Black Riders," a prime "Pickwick," an 1865 "Alice," an "Al Aaraaf," a "Waverly." But you could have had your choice among seven "Moby Dicks" ($85 to $330), nine "Scarlet Letters" ($15 to $125), ten "Uncle Remuses" ($25 to $150), and eleven "Huckleberry Finns" ($30 to $490). The price-spread here evidenced is, of course, a pretty accurate index of condition; of the first two titles cited no single copy that could be denominated good was offered. The $490 "Huckleberry Finn" was in blue cloth—how the meaningless color fetish persists!

The newest unit in the indispensable series of "American Book-Prices Current," available several months ahead of the usual publication date, reveals these facts with its customary statistical dispassionateness. It discloses, too, several surprises. Zane Grey, Meredith Nicholson, and Rupert Hughes make their auction debuts, conceivably to their own mild astonishment. Mr. Hughes is represented not by his "George Washington," which, inscribed, should be eminently auctionable, but by "We Can't Have Everything," "What Will People Say?" and comparable excursus into problem and lighter fiction. "Eben Holden" has long since attained the distinction of auction citation, but this year Irving Bacheller is represented in addition by several less momentous contributions to letters.

Tiger, Tiger!

The casual bombshell labelled "The Lady, or the Tiger?" which Frank R. Stockton tossed into the *Century* for November, 1882, has been reloaded into dozens of anthologies of American short stories, but it had apparently never occurred to anyone to issue it separately until Walter L. Pforzheimer translated it into a Christmas card a few weeks ago. Mr. Pforzheimer has added an entertaining essay on the writing, acceptance, and publication of the story and the gay clamor that followed its appearance—a clamor that has never altogether subsided and is never likely to. William Lyon Phelps, who recalls the "hysterical excitement" of 1882, adds a prefatory note. The result is a handsome thin octavo which, designed by the Pynson Printers and issued privately in an edition of 145 copies, presents the distinguished tale in a distinguished setting. Stockton received fifty dollars for the story—rather less than two cents a word. But in 1901, when the alert Edward Bok asked him to celebrate the imminent twentieth anniversary of the story with "a sketch upon the same subject" for which Bok would certainly have paid vastly more, Stockton courteously—and wisely—declined.

Jackets Again

Most rare-booksellers smile outwardly and curse inwardly at mention of the dust jacket. They wish most undevoutly that it had never been born (the date of its birth, by the way, has never been accurately determined). But born it got, and ever since modern first editions began to attract widespread collector interest, the dust jacket has been acquiring, from the bookseller's point of view, a superlative nuisance value.

It is otherwise in the auction room. There the dust jacket is looked upon as true cloth of gold. Its presence signifies, in general (but by no means always), a superfineness of condition in the book it encases, and the factor of condition continues to be the determining element in establishing values. Any doubts on this latter point were set at rest a few weeks ago when a brilliant copy of "The Story of a Bad Boy" (not, it must be added, jacketed) brought better than six hundred dollars.

This disparity of opinion is readily explained. If a book is excessively rare even without the jacket, it is inevitably far rarer with it. The rare-bookseller cannot survive by selling only excessively rare books, because he cannot get enough of them. Customers who insist on dust jackets with books of this sort, therefore, are of no particular use to him. Those books which are readily available in jackets are likely, by that very token, to be too common to appeal to the seeker after the grand or even the moderate rarities. There is, too, the practical consideration that jackets tatter and fray, and suffer from even the most genteel manhandling of the casual shelf-shopper—something the auction house does not have to take into account because of the swift passage of vendible material through its jurisdiction. But, more important, every book listed for sale at auction is a law unto itself—for the time being it is for all practical purposes the only copy in existence. It will sell anyway, jacketed or not, but with the jacket it becomes for the moment the cynosure of the collecting world. And that world need consist of only two rabid bidders to be exciting.

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Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

WE have had occasion, as who hasn't, to make fun now and then of the U. S. Government Printing Office which (like Edward Lear) has issued "such volumes of stuff." ☞All the more pleasant then to utter a loud halloo in praise of an admirable little book, written with lucid sense, printed and designed with many fine illustrations, attractive type, artistic taste. ☞It is *Little Waters, a study of headwater streams, their use and relations to the land.* ☞It was written by H. S. Person (and associate economists) for the Soil Conservation Service. It makes a clear and telling study of the whole problem of Nature's balance between land and drainage; man's disruption of that equilibrium; the results, and the restorations necessary for the future.

☞It is a fascinating study and we are interested to hear that it is a project specially fathered by President Roosevelt. This is the kind of campaign literature that Old Q approves; it is encouraging to see government, among many disturbing wastages, tackling a job as well as this little book shows. ☞Why doesn't the Soil Conservation Service send round some copies for review? If they'll mail us half a dozen we'll put them in good hands. ☞The whole matter of soil erosion and too quick drainage has its intellectual parables too. ☞This generation badly needs to plant shady places in the mind, and place strategic reservoirs, to promote evaporation and prevent too rapid run-off. ☞A few mental forest preserves, with plenty of humus and litter, keep the intellect from barrenness.

☞It would have been pleasant if Scribners had included in *The Last Puritan* some specific come-on and allure for possible customers of Santayana's other books. People capable of reading that novel would get huge pleasure out of *Soliloquies in England, Character and Opinion in the U. S.*, and *Little Essays.* ☞Has any bookseller really tried to use the well-deserved success of Santayana's novel as a chance to lead a few readers toward his other delightful books? ☞Too many booksellers are like the G. O. P., standpatriots. ☞Very characteristic of this goofy planet is a story Josephine McQuillin tells in the Detroit *Saturday Night.* A bookseller last fall had a window display of *Green Light.* But demand was so brisk that copies of other books had to be put in the window with *Green Light* jackets on them. ☞One of these substitutes, in press of business, got into the rental library department and was taken out by a client. Not until the tenth borrowing did any reader discover that the book she was reading was not *Green Light.*

☞Doubleday, Doran were on the ball when the news broke that Hollywood had stopped production on "It Can't Happen Here." The story appeared Sunday, Feb. 16, and the boys at Garden City made the Monday morning papers with their quarter page ad, headed "It *is* happening here." Since then there have been a good many reports about the film, most of which have been denied later. Meanwhile the book is selling, and the author and publishers deserve a hand.

☞Franklin M. Watts, who represents the SRL—among other things—in the Middle West, sends us some news of the twenty-five cent pamphlets on Hobbies, published by The Leisure League: "Marshall Field book department pioneered by advertising the Leisure League Little Books the first week in February and sold in one week more copies than any single retail account sold in the entire year 1935. Editors will be dismayed to learn that the title *You Can Write* led the list of best sellers, yet there is some hope left, as *How to Sell What You Write* sold only half as well."

☞Last week fourteen young women in the Book Department of L. Bamberger & Co. in Newark, N. J., subscribed *en masse* to the SRL for the coming year.

☞We meant, several weeks ago, to record our sorrow at the death of a fine writer, Allan Monkhouse, long on the staff of the Manchester *Guardian.* Does anyone remember his *My Daughter Helen* —published, we think, by Harcourt.

Over the Counter

The Saturday Review's Guide to Current Attractions

Trade Mark	*Label*	*Contents*	*Flavor*
YOUNG WIFE *Wallace Irwin* (Appleton-Century: $2.)	Novel	Recipe: Chuck in a big six-footer with dandy muscles; add a Frisco architect with two grown brats; mix with a gorgeous dame: and you get the usual triangle with complications.	Vitamins A B C D E F G H I
BRANDED MEN *Frank C. Robertson* (Dodge: $2.)	Western	Dumb, aged Lord Teasdale can't see that Manager Kamp is slowly gypping him out of everything but his gold inlays. Niece and two newcomers frustrate the villain.	Right Smart

from THE INNER SANCTUM *of*

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WILL DURANT, author of *The Story of Civilization: I Our Oriental Heritage*

Looking over the shoulder of the Sales Department the other day, your correspondents discovered that, up to twelve minutes of four on February 22, *The Story of Civilization—Our Oriental Heritage*, by WILL DURANT, had sold exactly 13,760 copies in the six months since publication date.

That isn't enough.

It is true that that many thousands constitutes a large sale for a book, normally. But it isn't enough for *The Story of Civilization*—and here's why:

Because The Story of Civilization has been universally hailed as a greater book than *The Story of Pilosophy.*

Because this book is, to any book-lover, a treasure trove which will keep him occupied for more time than would a half dozen novels.

Because, in these rich pages, in the radiant light of WILL DURANT'S wisdom, the whole storied East, from its antique beginnings to its present fateful chaos, rises up again in authentic, living detail. Dynasties have their being, empires rise and fall and mankind carries on its endless adventure. The greatest stories ever told are but chapters in this book, the lives of world geniuses merely footnotes.

Not often is it given to a publisher to issue a book so definitely marked for the years. Civilization as we know it in this year of grace may or may not be imperiled (in the H. G. Wells sweepstakes betting on the race between intelligence and catastrophe your correspondents have a hot tip on catastrophe) but in this magnificent book its story is set down to withstand the ravages of time. Your correspondents have seen this book grow through the years and with profound homage they have seen Will Durant quietly consecrate twenty years of his life to its completion. There must be more than 13,760 human beings who will want to own and read a book so conceived and so written.

—ESSANDESS

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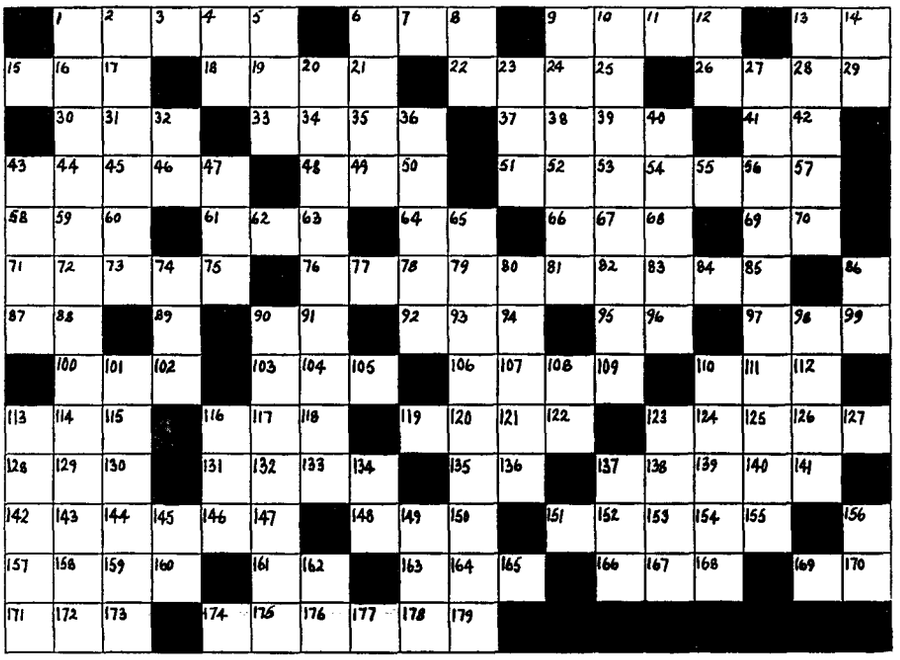
Double-Crostics: No. 101

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY



DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-eight words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Unless otherwise indicated, the author is English or American.

The solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 19 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

I. Dickens's illustrator.

II. A collection or mass.

III. Piquant.

IV. To jut or project over.

V. Haltingly.

VI. Living Irish poet.

VII. Other name for Mt. Pisgah.

VIII. Unblemished; pure.

IX. Rudimentary sensation.

X. Beneficent ancestral spirits.

XI. Suspicious (slang).

XII. German composer (1784-1859).

XIII. Tending to fix the attention.

XIV. The nightingale.

XV. Suppositions.

XVI. English diplomat.

XVII. City on the Loire.

XVIII. A marine mollusk.

XIX. British emigrant ship (1620).

XX. Exultant.

XXI. European country.

XXII. British spy of the Revolution.

XXIII. Prolix.

XXIV. Restless; uneasy.

XXV. Friendly relations.

XXVI. Impious.

XXVII. Son of Lamech.

XXVIII. A viper.

WORDS

175	3	94	89	108	161	34	67	98	159
58	74	15	130	93	112	8	96	107	141	120
45	23	103	85						
100	119	132	138	66	178	149	171		
133	14	179	4	53	115				
122	87	170	26	5					
153	19	37	90						
71	7	38	33	146					
81	143	6	27	109	36	72	42		
172	79	121	168	30					
11	28	164	176	155					
68	77	70	167	91					
140	80	56	126	160	144	41	18	49	
78	116	35	114	95	147	102	54		
64	92	123	10	88	110	177	75	2	57
139	51	173	105						
101	148	50	166	145	118				
52	60	174	83	17	24				
106	97	21	113	163	124	43	117	39	
169	84	76	156	13	61				
69	162	22	125	31	29				
104	59	150	20	65					
158	25	82	9	46	131	63			
128	111	134	137	154	165	86			
62	151	135	48	32					
129	136	1	44	16	99				
73	152	55	47						
157	12	40	142	127					

The New Books

(*Continued from page 19*)

bridge (England) and in India. The book is therefore nearly everywhere authoritative in the fullest sense, though here and there Born makes allusion to recent theories of his own which have not yet commanded universal assent. Of its five chapters, one is chiefly about the behavior of atoms and molecules in gases, one chiefly about electrons, one mainly about light—it is in this chapter that Born makes his principal attempt to explain the celebrated wave-and-particle dilemma which bulks so large in modern physical theory—one about the structure of the atom, and one about the properties of atom-nuclei, including radioactivity and transmutation. More is said about the notion of probability than is usual in such books, Born having been largely responsible for its great role in current physical theory.

The book is therefore important; but to what kind of reader can it most be recommended? Here we are in doubt. It is evidently meant for the layman; but we fear that the author had in mind that wonderful being, the old-fashioned German "layman," who used to read "handbooks" weighing pounds. "The Restless Universe" is not light reading. Anyone who goes through it will prove himself endowed with a love of physical science and some tenacity of purpose; but for such a person it will be valuable. His labors will be enlivened by some very clever sketches, some of which fuse together into "movies" when the pages are rapidly turned. K. K. D.

Brief Mention

A Life of *Jessie Benton Fremont*, wife of the Presidential candidate, has been published by John Henry Nash, San Francisco, written by Catherine Coffin Phillips. This is a contribution to early Western history. * * * A book which will be of interest to English scholars is Fred O. Nolte's *Early Middle Class Drama* (1696-1774), published by the Lancaster Press, Lancaster, Pa. ($2). With this should be noted Robert Gale Noyes's *Ben Jonson on the English Stage 1660-1776* (Harvard University Press, $3.50). Another scholarly publication important for its historical details is *Royal Instructions to British Colonial Governors 1670-1776*, collated and edited by Leonard Woods Labaree (Appleton-Century, 2 vols., $10). * * * Those interested in the Far East should note a survey called *The Problem of the Far East*, by Sobei Mogi and H. Vere Redman (Lippincott, $2). * * * *Royal Sarcophagi of the XVIII Dynasty*, by William C. Hayes (Princeton Press, $10), is a monograph elaborately illustrated. * * * Edward Hungerford's *Pathway of Empire* (McBride, $3.50) is a popular study of New York State. Another state book is *The History of Oregon Literature* by Alfred Powers (Portland, Ore., Metropolitan Publishers, $4). * * * Two books on Negroes recently published are *Negro History in Thirteen Plays*, by Willis Richardson and May Miller (The Associated Publishers, Washington, D. C., $3.25), and *The Story of the Negro Retold*, by Carter Godwin Woodson, from the same publisher ($2.15).

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WOMAN OF CULTURE, wide travel, desires position as graduate nurse, companion, secretary with elderly person; intelligent, tactful, management of home. Free to travel. Remuneration secondary, finest credentials. Box 48-B.

RADIO ENGINEER, Thirtyish, bachelor, without reason. Rambling Manhattan, Chicago, Washington, points west, periodically bored, annoyed with technical talking people, desires foolish correspondence, interesting wideawake feminine writers. Box 74-B.

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PERSONALS

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PROFESSOR on leave will rent comfortably furnished seven-room house adjacent to campus University of Chicago, June to January. Box 84-B.

YOUNG LADY, twenty-six, stranger in New York, would like to meet refined young man, preferably stranger in town, with general interests. Box 85-B.

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CANADIAN MARITIMES cottage, 24 hours New York. Will sell, rent. Restricted. Owner.

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BOSTONIAN, American citizen, formerly flyer Italian army, artist sculptor, will teach Italian or art interesting young lady, exchange English diction. Apartment No. 209, 410 Memorial Drive, Cambridge, Mass.

MADELEINE ARNAUDET, Translator: French, English, Spanish. All work neatly typed.

WANTED "LONDON TIMES," daily, July 1929-1930. State price. Box 87-B.

YOUNG WOMAN of quiet habits would occupy New York apartment with servant during owners' absence, arranging for cleaning, airing, care pets and plants. Box 88-B.

WOMAN, forty, teacher, desires summer employment. Box 89-B.

PRINCETON A.B., M.A., age 31, formerly instructor Bryn Mawr (2 years), Brown (4), wishes position: tutor, secretary, companion, bookshop assistant. Can cook. Box 90-B.

ALERT YOUNG LADY, 35, New Yorker, professional, interested in literature and drama from both reading and writing angle, invites intelligent correspondence. Box 91-B.

PACIFIC COAST WOMAN, intelligent (but not academic), often finds herself bored with a superfluity of feminine chatter and would like to exchange ideas now and then with one of the opposite sex also middle-fortyish and interested in many things,—books, birds, food, flowers, country-life, or just living. Box 92-B.

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LIBERAL MINDED MAIDEN paging chivalrous gentlemen desiring sprightly column for Democratic Paper. Box 94-B.

WANTED TO ADOPT: brother between three and seven for already adopted girl age three. Boy that will fit into cultured, imaginative, bookish, musical family: Gentiles. Box 95-B.

CANADIAN LADY TEACHER, university graduate, fairly young and amiable, seeks employment, domestic or otherwise, with evenings free, or hours off to attend Columbia University. Can make personal application Easter week. Box 96-B

ERSTWHILE COSMOPOLITE, still broad-minded—now of the Landed Gentry—fast becoming Bucolic—craves epistolary refreshment. Sunkist California Male.

OH, DEAR, I wonder if I was ill-advised about this pedestal—it's awfully hard and cold! And the landscape gets more and more usual, it seems. Please would some one strong come up and comfort me? Snowdrifts.

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* *with a bow to* GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

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